

# SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH – Activities in 2015

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH (PHE)

Following the mandate of the [Rio Political Declaration](#), the WHO Social Determinants of Health Unit has addressed the following areas of work in 2015:

- Better governance for health and development – Health in All Policies Training
- Health sector reorientation towards SDH and reducing health inequities
- Guidance on pro equity linkages between environmental and social health determinants
- Monitoring progress on the SDH and health equity.

Following the WHO mandate in Resolution WHA65.8, the [Progress report on Social Determinants of Health](#) was presented at the 68<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly in May 2015.

*Mortality reduction in child under-5 mortality between 1990 and 2010, 50% was attributed to non-health sector investments by the Success Factors study*

*Reducing inequalities in NCDs requires substantial non-health sector investments to 50% of inequalities in major NCDs, especially for cardiovascular diseases and lung cancer, are accounted by social inequalities in risk factors, as reported by The Lancet NCD Action Group*

*Integrated social and medical services, tailored to disadvantaged families and delivered by nurses in homes, show up to 10-fold reductions in child mortality between treatment and control groups, as well as educational and employment co-benefits*

Source: [WHO, Health in All Policies 2015](#)

## Better governance for health and development – Health in All Policies Training

[A training manual](#) to increase understanding of the Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach among health and other professionals was developed and launched in February 2015. In order to reach the goals of the HiAP approach, a mutual collaboration and capacity building among governmental institutions and United Nations agencies is required. Therefore, the WHO/SDH organized the first HiAP 'train the trainers' workshop in Geneva, Switzerland, in March 2015.

Following this global training, several regional and national trainings/workshops were held worldwide in 2015, bringing together both academic institutions and policy makers:

- [Paramaribo, Suriname](#) (Caribbean subregional workshop – May 2015)
- [Kuopio, Finland](#) (International workshop – June 2015)
- [New Delhi – India](#) (SEARO regional training – July 2015),
- [Cuernavaca, Mexico](#) (PAHO regional course and workshop – July 2015)
- [Rio De Janeiro – Brazil](#) (Latin America workshop – November 2015)
- [Johannesburg – South Africa](#) (AFRO regional course and workshop – December 2015)

## Health sector reorientation towards SDH and reducing health inequities

The review methodology supports the reorienting of health programmes to improve programme effectiveness, close coverage gaps and better meet population needs. The methodology draws from the fields of equity, social determinants, gender and human rights, as was piloted in 2015 in collaboration between WHO, national governments and other partners. Multidisciplinary review teams from [Albania, Kosovo, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine](#) have been working in priority national maternal and child health programmes. A training and review workshop was held in May 2015, in which teams used the step-wise methodology to assess the nature and source of inequities, and to identify potential solutions. In [Morocco](#), the review team is analyzing the national diabetes programme and linkages to the noncommunicable diseases strategy, using Fès-Boulemane region as a study site. In [Nepal](#), the methodology is being applied to the national adolescent sexual and reproductive health programme. Following training and capacity building events, all teams are advancing analysis to finalize recommendations.

## Guidance on pro equity linkages between environmental and social health determinants

The quality and environmental context of housing is increasingly considered as being one of the main dimensions of environmental inequality. Based on the evidence available, WHO has scaled up activities to address health inequities due to substandard housing conditions and has been developing [new Housing and Health Guidelines to be finalized in 2016 and is currently addressing health in slums and other informal settlements](#).